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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

September 11, 2006

His Excellency Perezzi Kamunanwire
Ambassador of the Republic of Uganda
5911 Sixteenth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20011

Dear Ambassador Kamunanwire:

It is with great pleasure that I write to you, to convey news that could have a vitally important bearing on your country's battle against malaria. I have just received a reply to my June 28 letter to EU President José Manuel Barroso, informing me that the European Union fully supports decisions by Uganda and other African nations to use DDT for disease control. He also says: "Should food consignments exported to the EU by a partner country using DDT be found to be contaminated with DDT above accepted residue levels, only the affected consignment would be withdrawn from the market." There would not be a disruption of trade.

It is my conviction that this letter, from the highest ranking official in the EU government, gives Uganda a "green light" to use DDT to help end the scourge of malaria, without fear of trade sanctions or other adverse repercussions by the European Union or individual European nations. The letter removes the cloud of uncertainty that has long hung over Africa's desire to use DDT to save lives.

I have enclosed a copy of President Barroso's letter, in hope that you will be able to convey it to President Museveni, the Ministers of Health and the National Environment Management Authority, and other appropriate officials in Uganda.

As a physician, Senator and keen observer of African affairs, I have high admiration for President Museveni and the thoughtful way Uganda is addressing this critical health issue. I've long advocated DDT, not as "the solution" to malaria, but as an essential weapon in the battle against this killer disease.

Uganda's ongoing debate over DDT raises concerns, however. While the Minister of Health and many others clearly support indoor spraying with DDT, the NEMA Minister and certain businesses and NGOs clearly do not. A principal argument against using DDT has been the fear that doing so might result in shipments of food, fish and flowers being banned from Europe. Thankfully, these fears can now be put to rest, as there is virtually no likelihood that DDT from indoor spraying programs could contaminate such shipments – certainly not at levels above what might trigger concerns among EU officials.

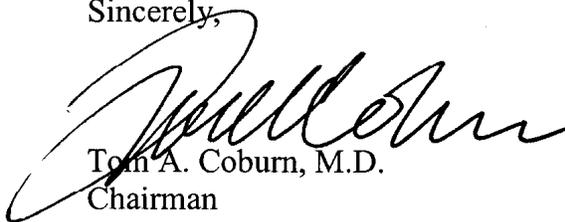
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I have also been informed by very reliable sources that in just one week the WHO's new malaria director, Dr. Arata Kochi, will announce new WHO guidelines that support DDT use much more strongly. As I am sure you know, the USAID also supports DDT use, as does the President's Malaria Initiative, and South Africa, Swaziland and other nations have had tremendous success from using it to control malaria.

The United States and Europe completely eradicated malaria, in large measure because of DDT. Now the Pearl of Africa and other African nations can begin to move forward along that same path, toward becoming malaria-free, healthy and prosperous, on equal footing with the USA and EU.

Thank you for conveying these letters and my personal best wishes to President Museveni. If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Coburn', written over the printed name.

Tom A. Coburn, M.D.

Chairman

Subcommittee on Federal Financial
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